

Amendments To the Claims:

Please amend the claims as shown. Applicants reserve the right to pursue any cancelled claims at a later date.

1.-3. (cancelled)

4. (new) A modular system, comprising:

a rear panel bus having:

a plurality of slots configured to accommodate plug-in modules;

an optical waveguide for guiding optical signals, the optical waveguide having a number of breaks relative to a propagation direction of the optical signals, each break assigned to one of the slots; and

a plurality of modules plugged into the slots, each module including a coupling unit for coupling the optical signals to the respective module, wherein

a dimension of the breaks is only slightly larger than a dimension of the coupling units relative to the propagation direction,

each coupling unit comprises first and second optical waveguide parts,

one end of the first optical waveguide part has an oblique end face for completely coupling out the optical signals from the optical waveguide, and

one end of the second optical waveguide part has an oblique end face for coupling the optical signals into the waveguide in the propagation direction, the optical signals transmitted by an optical emitter arranged on the respective module.

5. (new) The modular system according to claim 4, wherein the dimension of the breaks essentially equals the dimension of the coupling units relative to the propagation direction.

6. (new) The modular system as claimed in claim 4, further comprising attenuating elements configured to be inserted into the breaks, wherein a dimension of the attenuating

elements is slightly smaller than the dimension of the breaks, and the attenuating elements have a specific attenuation for the optical signals.

7. (new) The modular system as claimed in claim 6, wherein the dimension of the attenuating elements essentially equals the dimension of the breaks.

8. (new) The modular system as claimed in claim 4, wherein
the modular system is an automation system,
one of the inserted modules is configured as a master module for the remaining
modules.

9. (new) The modular system as claimed in claim 8, wherein the master module is
configured for communication and to check via the optical waveguide if a valid address has
been assigned to the remaining modules.